

Loudoun County Public Schools

Office of Special Education



Practices Handbook

Est. 2018

Practice Topic:	Classroom Observations – Outside professionals
Objective(s):	To outline the purpose of classroom/student observations and provide specific guidance for requesting and conducting observations by professionals by non-LCPS employees.
Reference(s):	Loudoun County Public Schools Parent Request for Classroom Observation Prince William County Public Schools Best Practice Guidelines: Classroom Observations
Aligned Regulation(s):	8VAC20-81-110. Individualized education program.
Background/ Practice:	<p>Background: LCPS encourages parent involvement in their child's education including opportunities for observations and visitations. Observations may provide individuals the opportunity to support the education of a child, and must be managed carefully in consideration of the privacy rights of other students in the class since visitors can change the classroom dynamics and can increase the risk of improper disclosure of a student's personally identifiable information. In the interest of preserving those privacy rights of the child and to ensure the least disruption of the learning process, requests for observations will be guided by the following practices:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All requests will be made using the Loudoun County Public Schools Parent Request for Classroom Observation form. 2. As required by the form, a release of confidential information form must be signed prior to the observation. 3. Requests containing the above (2) pieces of documentation will be submitted at least seven business days prior to the requested date. 4. School administration must consider and approve the request for an observation and has the authority to modify specifics of observation (date, time, length of

observation, or frequency) requested to protect the instructional process, protect confidentiality, and to meet the intended purpose of the observation.

Administrators will consider the needs of the student, the instructional environment, the number and timing of requests, and the proximity of the request to IEP and other educational meetings.

5. Observations will be limited to one (1) non-LCPS observer during the approved visit.
6. The classroom observation will be time specific (generally, not to exceed 30 minutes or one class period).
7. School administration should notify the classroom staff in advance.
8. Observer will be limited to “observation only,” in order not to disrupt instruction and/or learning activities during the observation. If interferences with instruction are displayed, then observer will be escorted to the office and observation will be terminated. Follow up collaborative meetings may be scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time for the purpose of discussing any specifics or the need for clarification.
9. Observer must sign in as a visitor in the main office of the school and sign out upon exiting the building.
10. School administration or designee must accompany the observer during the duration of the observation. If in the event, the observer strays from the designated observation area, then that observer should be escorted to the office and the observation will be terminated.
11. Observer must maintain confidentiality of other students in the classroom.
12. The use of cameras, audio, or video recording devices, and the use of electronic devices that have the capability of taking photographs or taking audio or video recordings, is prohibited during a classroom observation. This prohibition of the use of electronic devices includes, but is not limited to, cell phones and other portable electronic devices.

	<p>13. Observer must provide copies of notes, reports, and other documentation gleaned from the observation following the observation and maybe requested to edit/redact such documentation as necessary to protect the privacy rights of other identifiable students. This documentation is to be maintained in the student cumulative record in the correspondence section.</p> <p>Requests for observations by outside experts as part of an approved Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) at public expense will be permitted.</p>
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